ESSAYS

ON

FRIENDSHIP AND OLD-AGE,

BY THE

MARCHIONESS DE LAMBERT.

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Que tout ce qu'elle dit eſt grace;
Tout ce qu'elle penſe, raiſon. LA MOTTE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY A LADY.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

TO

WILLIAM MELMOTH, Esq.

LONDON.

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

TO

WILLIAM MELMOTH, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

AS you have led me, though not intentionally, into thoſe perils, that attend a novice in publication, I flatter myſelf you will pardon the liberty I take in recommending the two following little eſſays to your protection.

In peruſing your elegant tranſlation of Lælius, I was mortified to find, that in ſpeaking of the diſtinguiſhed modern writers on Friendſhip, you had omitted the name of the amiable Marchioneſs de Lambert, whoſe eſſay on the ſubject I had read with infinite pleaſure, and perhaps with that partiality, which women generally diſcover towards an author of their own ſex.

My regard for this excellent moraliſt, tempted me, upon this occaſion, to enquire in what dreſs ſhe had been preſented to our country; and the only tranſlation of theſe treatiſes that I could diſcover, appeared to me ſo very unworthy of the original,

that

that I could not help feeling a deſire to give the Engliſh reader a more adequate idea of their merit.—How far I have been able to ſucceed, I am now to learn from the Public, as I dare not utterly confide in the approbation of a few partial friends. Let me honeſtly confeſs, that I not only engaged in a new verſion of the eſſays in queſtion, becauſe they appeared to me not ſo well tranſlated as ſome of her other works, but from an ambition of placing her treatiſes on Friendſhip and Old-Age by the ſide of your Lælius and Cato: happy, were I able to enrich my tranſlation with ſuch biographical and critical remarks, as give to your's ſo conſiderable a portion of original me-

rit! but I muſt content myſelf with barely relating, in this preface, the few particulars, which I have been able to collect concerning my author, from the writers of her country.

The Marchioneſs de Lambert was the only daughter of Stephen de Marguenot, Seigneur de Courcelles, and born in the year 1647: ſhe loſt her father when ſhe was yet an infant; a circumſtance that proved, in its conſequences, the occaſion of her early and uncommon progreſs in literature; for by the ſecond marriage of her mother ſhe fell under the care of the celebrated Bachaumont, who wrote, in conjunction with the ſprightly poet La Chappelle, the pleaſant motley compoſition

compoſition in proſe and verſe, which bears the name of theſe lively friends. He was, as Voltaire has remarked, one of the moſt amiable and accompliſhed characters of his age, and cultivated, with great pleaſure and affection, that early paſſion for letters, which his little daughter-in-law ſoon began to diſplay. Under the care of ſo engaging a preceptor, ſhe acquired that fund of elegant and uſeful knowledge, which afforded her ſuch conſiderable ſupport in all the viciſſitudes of a long life, and which has ſecured to her a laſting reputation in the republic of letters.

At the age of nineteen ſhe was married

married to Henry de Lambert, Marquis de Saint Bris, lieutenant-general, and governor of Luxemburg, who died in 1686, leaving her a ſon and daughter, on whoſe education ſhe exerted the utmoſt powers of her affectionate mind, which are beautifully diſplayed in her two eſſays of advice, addreſſed to her children.

On the death of her huſband, ſhe was perſecuted with long and vexatious law-ſuits, in which her whole fortune was at ſtake, and in the conduct of which ſhe is ſaid to have given moſt ſtriking proofs of a maſculine underſtanding. As theſe were happily terminated in her favor, ſhe paſſed the

the remainder of her life in great affluence, and chiefly in Paris, where ſhe died at the age of eighty-ſix, in the year 1733.

It is ſingular, that this lady, who in general poſſeſſed ſuch ſolidity of judgment, ſhould, in one inſtance, be under the influence of a vulgar prejudice, and conſider it as unbecoming a woman of her rank to appear in the character of an author. Her admirable eſſays to her children were firſt publiſhed in a clandeſtine manner, and their appearance in the world gave her ſo much diſquietude, that, as ſhe declares herſelf, in one of her letters, ſhe exerted her utmoſt efforts to ſuppreſs them; and we may juſtly ſay of her, what Pope

ſays

ſays of Shakeſpeare, though on a very different occaſion,

" She grew immortal in her own deſpite."

Her extreme deſire to prevent the circulation of her writings, was owing, indeed, in ſome degree, to the great ſhare of natural modeſty which ſhe poſſeſſed, and ſtill more, I apprehend, to a painful dread of that raillery to which every French lady was expoſed, who ventured to engage deeply in any literary purſuits, after the appearance of Moliere's admirable comedy of the Femmes Savantes, in 1672, which was, indeed, ſuppoſed to glance a little at the hotel de Lambert *.

Our

* This is aſſerted in a few remarks prefixed to the Femmes Savantes, in the laſt octavo

Our author had, however, the ſpirit to become the champion of her ſex, in a little eſſay which ſhe compoſed for the peruſal of her friends, entitled, "New Reflections on Women." She here combats, with great vivacity and judgment, the dangerous ridicule of Moliere; and obſerves, that the wit of this comic writer had proved as prejudicial to female underſtanding in France, as the pleaſantry of Cervantes had to heroic valour in

tavo edition of Moliere; but the circumſtance appears to me improbable, as this comedy was firſt repreſented a few years after the marriage of Madame de Lambert—and her literary aſſemblies did not, I believe, attract the notice of the public till towards the latter period of her life.

Spain. Nor does ſhe ſeem to have exaggerated the ill effects of that ridicule which ſhe ſo warmly oppoſed, and of which ſhe was ſo perfect a judge. A living French author, of conſiderable reputation, has repreſented this comedy of Moliere in the ſame point of view, in a very entertaining eſſay concerning the character, manners, and underſtanding of women in different ages. Having alluded to the play of Moliere, he proceeds with the following remarks:—"Some "women, after this, applied "themſelves to letters, and ſome "cultivated the ſciences; but the "example was far from general.

"In

"In the moſt enlightened of "ages, knowledge was deemed "unpardonable in females. A "taſte for letters was conſidered "as a kind of incongruity in "the Great, and as pedantry in "Women. This ſecret contempt, "worthy of our moſt barbarous "anceſtors, muſt have impoſed "particular reſtraint on that ſex, "which is moſt under the influ-"ence of opinion. Some women "braved this prejudice, but ſuch "conduct was even cenſured as "criminal. As all things that "are excellent have their ex-"ceſſes, and as a *bon mot* fails "not to operate as a reaſon, in "blending what is ridiculous "with what is uſeful, it became

"an

" an eaſy matter to diſcredit
" knowledge in women. Boi-
" leau and Moliere fortified the
" prejudice, by the authority of
" their genius. . . . . .

" Thus, in the age of Lewis the
" XIVth, women were reduced
" to conceal themſelves in the
" purſuit of inſtruction, and to
" be as much aſhamed of know-
" ledge, as they would have been
" of an intrigue in ages leſs po-
" liſhed. Some, however, had
" the reſolution to free them-
" ſelves from that ignorance
" which was impoſed on them
" as a duty; but the greater
" number concealed this hardi-
" neſs of ſpirit, or, if they were
" ſuſpected, took every meaſure

" to

" to avoid conviction, and al-
" lowed Friendſhip only to be
" their confident or their accom-
" plice."

This was particularly the caſe with Madame de Lambert; who, having defended her ſex with great ſpirit, in the eſſay I have mentioned, could not be prevailed on to publiſh that defence; and in a letter to Monſieur de St. Hyacinthe, then in London, ſhe expreſſes her concern at its having ſtolen into the world. She thanks him, at the ſame time, for an Engliſh tranſlation of her work which he had ſent her, and juſtifies herſelf in the following manner, in anſwer to a very ſingular obſervation of her tranſla-

tor, Mr. Lockman. "He ſays "in his preface, that what I have "written on women is my apolo-"gy—I have never had occaſion "to make any. He accuſes me of "having a tender and a feeling "ſoul. I deny not the charge; "it remains only to enquire to "what I have applied it."

I muſt obſerve, for the honor of my author, that few perſons, of any country, could have leſs reaſon to apprehend ſuch an enquiry, as it is univerſally allowed that her whole life was animated by that ſpirit of tenderneſs and virtue, which ſtill charm us in her writings. One of the moſt ſtriking proofs of the high eſteem in which ſhe was held by her con-

contemporaries, is found in a letter of the amiable Fenelon, to their common friend Monſieur de Sacy, in which he ſpeaks both of her compoſitions and her character in terms of the warmeſt admiration.

Voltaire happily obſerves, ſpeaking of our author, in his Age of Lewis the XIVth,—"her "treatiſe on Friendſhip proves "that ſhe deſerved herſelf to "have friends." There are alſo many paſſages in her letters, which equally prove what exalted ideas ſhe entertained of this noble ſentiment, and how truly formed her own heart was, both to feel and inſpire it.

One paſſage in particular I cannot help mentioning, as it preſents a ſtriking picture of her own feelings, and preſerves a pleaſing anecdote of an amiable Prince, the accompliſhed but ſhort-lived diſciple of the virtuous Fenelon. In writing to her friend, on the death of the Duke of Burgundy, ſhe exclaims, "How great is "your private loſs, my dear "Sacy!—I muſt acquaint you "with a circumſtance that re-"lates to you, and which, per-"haps, you are yet to learn. I "had a friend in the houſhold "of the Prince, who, enchanted "with his virtues, was continu-"ally ſpeaking of them to me.

"He

" He has told me, that as the
" Prince was one day coming out
" of his chamber, where he had
" read your treatiſe on Friendſhip,
" he ſaid to him—I have juſt
" been reading a book, which has
" made me feel the misfortune
" of our rank. We cannot hope
" to have friends! We muſt re-
" nounce the moſt engaging ſen-
" timent in life. He felt, my
" dear Sacy, the neceſſity of
" friendſhip. The ſentiments of
" nature had their full influence
" over his heart, and majeſty diſ-
" appeared before them. He
" would have had friends, and
" he would not have choſen them
" from the crowd of his flatter-
" ers."

I have inſerted this paſſage, both becauſe the letter is omitted in the common Engliſh tranſlation of my author's works, and becauſe it ſhews ſhe was ſuperior to the little meanneſs of jealouſy towards a rival, who had written on the ſame ſubject with herſelf. In her intimacy with Monſieur de Sacy, ſhe diſplayed all the delicacy of the moſt refined friendſhip; and Monſieur d'Alembert makes ſuch pleaſing mention of their mutual regard, in his eulogy on this writer, that I am tempted to hazard a tranſlation of the paſſage.

" The talents of Monſieur de " Sacy, the reputation which he " had acquired, the mildneſs of " his

" his character, and his manners,
" procured his admiſſion into an
" enchanting ſociety, which is
" ſtill remembered in our days,
" after a period of more than
" forty years; I mean that of the
" Marchioneſs de Lambert. This
" lady aſſembled at her houſe
" many celebrated writers, at the
" head of whom were Fontenelle
" and La Motte, who united phi-
" loſophy to the charms of lite-
" rature, politeneſs to talents,
" and reciprocal eſteem to emu-
" lation. Madame de Lambert,
" who was accuſed of an exceſ-
" ſive partiality for wit, and who
" honored this reproach of fools,
" with an attention it hardly de-
" ſerved from her, anſwered it,

" by admitting into this little
" academy, more ſplendid than
" numerous, ſuch characters of
" the court, as were moſt diſtin-
" guiſhed by their ſtation and
" their birth. In this aſſembly
" they did not liſten to, or rather
" they were not acquainted with
" that rigid and unjuſt philoſo-
" phy, which, by impoſing on
" women a ſilence humiliating
" to themſelves, and melancholy
" to us, obliges them to conceal
" their underſtanding and their
" knowledge, with as much ſoli-
" citude as their moſt ſecret ſenti-
" ments and affections. They be-
" lieved, on the contrary, and they
" had the good fortune to expe-
" rience perpetually, in the pre-

" ſence

" ſence of Madame de Lambert,
" that a woman of virtue, deli-
" cacy, and ſentiment, animated
" with genius, and every pleaſing
" accompliſhment, was the prin-
" cipal tie, and the moſt at-
" tractive charm of a ſociety ſo
" happily compoſed; a rare aſ-
" ſemblage of elegance and
" knowledge, of imagination and
" judgment, of politeneſs and
" learning. It was in the midſt
" of this ſociety that Monſieur
" de Sacy compoſed his eſſay on
" Friendſhip. He addreſſed it
" to Madame de Lambert; and
" he was, indeed, much more her
" friend, than the other men of
" letters whom ſhe aſſembled.
" The intimacy of theſe were
only

" only agreeable to her, that of
" Monſieur de Sacy was much
" more, it was neceſſary to her
" happineſs. If the wit of Fon-
" tenelle and La Motte afforded
" her more reſources of amuſe-
" ment, ſhe found in Monſieur
" de Sacy a ſenſibility more con-
" genial with her heart, and a
" ſoul more in uniſon with her
" own. Under the eyes of this
" worthy friend, ſhe principally
" compoſed her excellent book,
" entitled, Advice from a Mother
" to her Son and Daughter; a
" work in which delicacy of taſte
" is united to that of ſentiment;
" knowledge of the world, to the
" moſt touching leſſons of vir-
" tue; and the lively graces of
" ſtile,

"ſtile, to the moſt natural ex-
"preſſions of maternal tender-
"neſs."

Among the ſmaller productions of our author, there are three very pleaſing portraits of Monſieur de Sacy, Fontenelle, and La Motte, drawn with equal delicacy and diſcernment; and among the Letters of the latter, in the 10th volume of his works, there are ſeveral which give a lively picture of the choſen ſociety which frequented the houſe of my author, particularly one from herſelf to the Ducheſs of Maine, who had expreſſed the moſt eager deſire to be admitted into her weekly aſſembly. Fontenelle ſuggeſted the pleaſantry of

of addreſſing the Ducheſs, before ſhe was admitted to their parties, in the name of the day in which the company aſſembled. La Motte, who had received particular compliments from her, was prevailed on to write as their ſecretary; and to his letter Madame de Lambert added the following:

" MADAME DE LAMBERT TO THE
" DUCHESS OF MAINE.

" BEHOLD, Madam, the ho-
" norable Tueſday, which comes
" to pay its homage to your Se-
" rene Highneſs. The great Fon-
" tenelle, adorned with all his
" talents, equally the favorite of
" the ſerious and the ſportive
" Muſe,

" Muſe, whoſe reputation is un-
" bounded; ſecretary, and almoſt
" preſident of our academies,
" throws himſelf at your feet.

" The inflexible La Motte,
" who has endeavored to aboliſh
" the adoration of Homer, and
" who has never burnt a grain of
" incenſe on his altar, throws a
" profuſion of flowers on your's.

" The Mentor of a great
" Prince, who inſtructs better
" than Minerva, who has lent
" new graces to Cicero, and is
" leſs his tranſlator than his rival,
" proſtrates himſelf before your
" Serene Highneſs.

" The amiable Abbé de Brage-
" lonne, cheriſhed by the Graces
" and the Muſes, and ſo extolled

" by

" by you, is received into that " band which celebrates your " praiſes.

" The exact, the preciſe, or " rather preciſion itſelf; in " ſhort, the great geometrician, " Monſieur de Mairan, comes to " renew that homage which he " has already had the honor to " pay you.

" You ſee, Madam, that all " our great men place their " glory in honoring you. It is " but juſt that the academy, " which is ſo deeply indebted " to you, ſhould make to your " Serene Highneſs their acknow- " ledgments in form. Our lan- " guage improves only when you " ſpeak it, or when it ſpeaks of " you.

" I ſhall

" I ſhall expect you, Madam, " with all the ſolicitude of that " reſpectful attachment, with " which I am,

" MADAM,

" Your moſt humble, and

" Moſt obedient Servant."

" *Paris, Auguſt* 23, 1726."

The anſwer of the Ducheſs expreſſes, in a lively manner, the moſt flattering eſteem for our author. Thus poſſeſſed of general regard, and equally honored by the applauſe of grandeur and of wit, ſhe paſſed her latter days in the moſt refined pleaſures of

of ſelect ſociety, and thoſe ſuperior delights which attend the exerciſe of every generous virtue. All theſe, however, were much checquered by the infirmities of a tender conſtitution—by the common maladies of old-age, and ſtill more by the death of her daughter, which happened two years before her own.

I have now given you the beſt account that I have been able to collect, of an author whom I never review without enthuſiaſtic admiration: but I can aſſure you, I am ſo far from being vain of the performance, that I have ſtill an earneſt deſire to ſee more juſtice done to her inſtructive

character, by a much abler hand.

As you have mentioned her friend Monſieur de Sacy with honor, in the advertiſement to your Lælius, allow me to hope, that in your next edition of that work, you will not omit the name of the Marchioneſs de Lambert.

I am not ſingular in this wiſh, but ſhare it with many friends, who are equally admirers with me, both of your writings and of her's; and particularly one, who has given me leave to cloſe my preface with the following Stanzas—but before I tranſcribe them, allow me to aſſure you,

that I am, with the trueſt eſteem for your literary talents, and ſtill more for your private virtues,

DEAR SIR,

Your ſincere Friend,

and obedient Servant,

E. H.

TO

TO

WILLIAM MELMOTH, Eſq;

On his omitting the name of the *Marchioneſs de Lambert*, in his account of the celebrated Modern Writers on Friendſhip.

HASTE, gentle MELMOTH, Beauty's friend,
Whoſe ſpirit glories to commend
Each talent ſhe diſplays;
And nobly ſcorns that Cynic pride,
Which oft to Woman has deny'd
The palm of letter'd praiſe:

O haſte! thy hard neglect retrieve,
For which the wounded Graces grieve,
And mourn their LAMBERT's lot;
To think her page, to them ſo dear,
Is, by the critic they revere,
Contemptuouſly forgot.

But, as the voice of Fame will own,
For ſuch offences to atone
Thou haſt the happy power:
As the poor annual decays,
This rhyme may periſh, but thy praiſe
Is a perennial flower.

Then in thy ſoft Virgilian proſe,
That with poetic ſweetneſs flows,
Whoſe beauties will outlive
The ruder verſe I vainly frame,
To lovely LAMBERT's injur'd name
Full retribution give!

Thy TULLY, whom all eyes confeſs
So graceful in thy Engliſh dreſs,
To Man confines his aim,
When he makes age forget its ills,
Or in the patriot ſoul inſtills
True Friendſhip's kindred flame:

But LAMBERT, Learning's ſofter pride,
Her ſex's unaſſuming guide,
Exerts a nicer art;
Her precept from Caprice withdraws,
And forms to philoſophic laws
The lighter female heart.

'Tis her's to teach the vain coquette
To bear, unwounded by regret,
The loſs of youthful grace;
And in the cultur'd mind diſplay
Charms, that compenſate and o'erpay
The ruins of her face:

For well ſhe eſtimates, above
The ſcorching beams of blazing Love,
Friendſhip's ſerener fires;
Wiſely ſhe moulds the mind of youth;
Sweet moraliſt! who teaches truth,
Yet teaching never tires.

Oh Eloquence! we own thy power:
Thy Tully is the richeſt flower,
That can the ſenſe regale:
But muſt the Roſe engroſs our eye?
And can we paſs unheeding by
The Lily of the vale?

No, MELMOTH! tho' a rival coaſt,
Tho' Gallia may this Lily boaſt,
Its ſweets thou wilt not wrong:
Open to Merit's juſt complaint,
Thou wilt in happier colours paint
The ſubject of my ſong;

That

That mind, where, tender as the dove,
The ſpirit of maternal love
Was fondly ſeen to brood,
And with ſoft Virtue's ſweeteſt tone,
With gentle grace, to Man unknown,
The Moraliſt endu'd.

To generous admiration fir'd,
Contemporary Wits conſpir'd
To praiſe her glowing page:
And France, exulting, ranks her name
With thoſe who conſtitute the fame
Of her Auguſtan age.

Britain applauds ſo juſt a meed:
Let Female worth, ſhe cries, ſucceed,
Where'er that worth may ſhine!
Let France unenvy'd boaſt her ſhare
Of glory from her letter'd Fair,
Since MONTAGU is mine!

ESSAY ON FRIENDSHIP.

YOU are under ſome obligation, my dear Sir, to conſole me for the loſs of our female friend. I eſteem as a loſs every diminution in friendſhip; ſince, in general, every ſentiment that begins to languiſh, expires. I examine myſelf with ſeverity, and I am perſuaded that I give more to friendſhip than

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than others, and yet it vaniſhes. Do, therefore, I entreat you, tell me, without reſerve, to whom I am to impute it, as my complaints muſt certainly have an object.—Is the fault in myſelf, or in my friends, or in the manners of the times? In ſhort, correct me where I fail, and conſole me for what I loſe.

The farther we advance in life, the more we feel the neceſſity of friendſhip. In proportion as reaſon improves, as the imagination encreaſes in brilliancy, and as the heart becomes pure and refined, the more the ſentiment of friendſhip appears requiſite to our happineſs. Behold, therefore, ſuch reflections as the leiſure of my

retirement has led me to throw together on the ſubject. In all ages friendſhip has been conſidered as one of the firſt bleſſings of life:—'Tis a ſentiment which is born with us, and the firſt movement of every heart is to unite itſelf to ſome other; nevertheleſs, it is a general lamentation, and all the world exclaims—"There are no friends." The whole circle of paſt ages hardly furniſhes three or four examples of a perfect union. Since then all men are agreed concerning the charms of friendſhip, why do they not comprehend their common intereſt, and unite to enjoy it? Mankind, in growing depraved, become blind to their own advantage.

Wiſdom

Wiſdom and truth, in enlightening our underſtandings, make our ſelf-love more adroit and penetrating, and teach us that it is our real intereſt to attach ourſelves to virtue, and that virtue brings with it all the gentle and engaging pleaſures of friendſhip. Let us examine, then, what are the charms and the advantages of friendſhip, that we may ſeek them; what its true characteriſtic, that we may know it; and what its duties, that we may diſcharge them.

The advantages of friendſhip manifeſt themſelves ſufficiently; all nature exclaims with one voice, that they are of all bleſſings the moſt deſirable:—without it, life has

has no charms. Man is made up of wants, and when left to himſelf, feels a void, which friendſhip only is capable of filling. Harraſſed in perpetual agitation and diſquietude, he can find repoſe only in the boſom of friendſhip. An ancient ſays, that Love is the ſon of Poverty and the God of Riches: of Poverty, becauſe he is by profeſſion a beggar; and of the God of Riches, becauſe he is naturally profuſe:—why may we not aſſign to Friendſhip the ſame origin? When ſhe is lively, ſhe requires ſympathy; tender and delicate characters feel the wants of the heart more than others feel the common neceſſities of life. On the other hand, from her

generoſity

generoſity of nature ſhe deſerves to be acknowledged as the daughter of the God of Riches; for thoſe have no pretenſions to the noble name of friendſhip, who ſhrink from her ſeverer duties in the hour of adverſity. In ſhort, feeling minds ſeek to unite themſelves by ſentiment; for as the heart was made for affection, it becomes lifeleſs the moment you refuſe it the pleaſure of loving and being beloved. Load men with poſſeſſions, with riches, and honors, and deprive them of the ſweets of friendſhip; all the charms of life diſappear.

Your reaſonable characters deny themſelves to love: women, from attachment to duty—men, from

from the fear of chuſing unwiſely. —You are attracted towards friendſhip; you are hurried into love. Friendſhip is often built upon the ruins of love; and ſuch friendſhip is moſt tender, moſt lively, and moſt aſſiduous. All the delicacies of love are found in the connection of which I ſpeak. Friendſhip, in its infancy, is ſubject to illuſion: Novelty pleaſes by promiſing much, and whatever awakens hope is of high eſtimation. Illuſion is a ſentiment which tranſports us beyond the truth, by obſcuring our reaſon. You ſee in the perſons that begin to pleaſe you, every perfection; and the imagination, which always acts under

under the dominion of the heart, lends to the beloved object the merit which it wants.—We love our friends much more for the qualities that we give them credit for, than for thoſe which they have diſplayed. There are alſo friendſhips which ſeem to depend on the ſtars; ſympathetic connections, and undiſcovered ties, which unite and bind us ſo firmly that we neither want vows nor proteſtations: Confidence takes the lead of language. When Montaign deſcribes to us his ſentiments towards his friend, "we ſought each other" ſays he, "upon report, and our names "had already embraced before "we became acquainted. It was

" was on a feſtival that I firſt
" ſaw him, and we both found
" ourſelves in an inſtant ſo united,
" ſo well known, and ſo intimate,
" that nothing could be more
" dear than we were to each
" other; and when I aſk myſelf
" whence ariſes that joy, that
" eaſe, that repoſe, which I feel
" when I ſee him? all I can ſay
" is, 'Tis he—'tis I." We enjoy in friendſhip the pureſt ſweets of love: the pleaſure of confidence, the charm of expoſing our ſoul to our friend—to read in his very heart—to ſee it without a ſhadow of diſguiſe; to diſcover our own weakneſſes, for we muſt think aloud before our friend. Thoſe only

who have enjoyed the enchanting pleaſure of friendſhip, know what delight there is in paſſing whole days together—how light, how rapid, the hours in the preſence of thoſe we love! what a reſource is the aſylum of friendſhip! By her we eſcape from the world, which is generally deceitful, falſe, and inconſtant.

But one of the great advantages of friendſhip, is the aid of good counſels: however rational we may be, we have ſtill occaſion for a director, as we ought to diſtruſt our reaſon, which frequently delivers as its own language, the mere dictates of paſſion. 'Tis a great ſupport to know

know we have a guide to correct and reform us. The ancients underſtood all the advantages of friendſhip; but they have ſo overcharged their portraits of it, that they are looked upon merely as fine ideas, which exiſt not in nature. As men love to fly from great models, and to reject great examples, becauſe they require much from us, they agree to treat them as chimeras; but in this we miſunderſtand our own intereſt. In withdrawing ourſelves from the obligations of friendſhip, we loſe all its advantages: it is a commerce, it is a kind of partnerſhip, in which the moſt worthy advances the largeſt ſum, and thinks himſelf happy in propor-

tion to that advance. We divide our fortune with our friend; riches, credit, attentions, ſervices, all belong to him, except our honor. It has appeared to me, to the diſgrace of our age, that offering our fortune to our friend is conſidered as the laſt effort of friendſhip; there are trials far ſuperior to this.

But one of the greateſt advantages of friendſhip, is to find in our friend a juſt model; for we deſire the eſteem of thoſe we love, and that deſire leads us to imitate thoſe virtues which may inſure it. Seneca recommends to his friend, to chuſe from amongſt the great men the moſt reſpectable character, to act always as if he

was preſent, and to render him an account of every action. Our friend is this exalted character to keep us in awe—nothing can inſure our conduct ſo effectually, both with regard to ourſelves and others, as a reſpectable friend. It is not allowed us to be imperfect in his eyes; neither do we often ſee virtue connected with vice. We do not love to ſee thoſe who conſtantly ſcrutinize and condemn us—we muſt be certain of our own integrity, to dare to give ourſelves certain friends. Pyrrhus ſaid, "Save me "from my friends, I fear only "them." Pliny having loſt his friend, "I fear," ſaid he, "I ſhall "ſlacken in the road of virtue;

" I have loſt my guide, and the " witneſs of my life."—In ſhort, perfect friendſhip puts us under the neceſſity of being virtuous; as it can only be maintained between eſtimable perſons, it forces us to reſemble them, that we may preſerve their regard. You will find then in friendſhip the ſecurity of good advice, the emulation of good example, ſympathy in your ſorrows, aſſiſtance in your wants, without being aſked, waited for, or purchaſed.

Let us now ſee what are the true characteriſtics of friendſhip, that we may know it. The principal merit which ſhould be required in our friends, is virtue: It is that which aſſures us they

are capable of friendſhip, and worthy of it: expect nothing from your connections, when they have not this foundation. In theſe days, it is not our taſtes, but our wants, which unite us. It is not the union of hearts, or of the underſtanding, that is ſought for in theſe intimacies. Thus we ſee them at an end as ſoon as they are begun. There can be no rupture without ſome degree of diſgrace, as there muſt be ſome fault on one ſide or the other: there is no eſcaping the ſhame of being miſtaken in our opinion, and of being obliged to retract it. We form intimacies without any exertion of our judgment, and we diſſolve them without re-

flection; what can be more contemptible? Chuſe your friend out of a thouſand; nothing is more important than ſuch a choice, ſince upon it your happineſs depends: as, on the contrary, nothing is more melancholy than to be connected with the unworthy, to have all the ſhame of a ſeparation to undergo, or the mortification of continuing united with perſons of no merit. We ſhould alſo remember, that our friends ſtamp our characters; we are diſcovered in them, and we thus preſent a kind of portrait of ourſelves to the public, and a confeſſion of what we are. We ſhould tremble, if we reflected what we hazard in acknowledging

ing a friend. Would you be eſteemed? live with perſons that are eſtimable; we ſhould therefore be well acquainted before we engage ourſelves.

The firſt mark, which aſſures us that any perſon is worthy of friendſhip, is virtue; after that, we muſt ſeek for friends that are free, and unenſlaved by the paſſions: thoſe whom ambition poſſeſſes, are little capable of this tender ſentiment; ſtill leſs capable are thoſe who are in the chains of love. Love carries away with him all the vivacity of friendſhip; it is a turbulent paſſion, and friendſhip is a gentle and well-regulated ſentiment. Love gives the ſoul

an intoxicating kind of joy, which is ſometimes followed by extreme diſcontent. The other is a reaſonable delight, always pure and always equal; nothing can obſtruct or weary it—it nouriſhes the ſoul.

Moreover, if you are attached to a perſon of merit, has not that perſon all your confidence? The friendſhip of a lover is too inſipid; he may, indeed, afford you ſome degree of attention, and ſome ſervices; but as to ſentiment, he has none left to beſtow.

The recompence of virtuous love is friendſhip; it is not, however, a common paſſion, but love of the pureſt and moſt exalted nature,

ture, which leads to this reward. Perſons of a frivolous and diſſipated turn are by no means ſuited to friendſhip; for every object with them carries away ſome portion of that ſentiment and ſolicitude which ſhould be the property of friendſhip.

Though it has been always ſaid, that we ſhould give to friendſhip a foundation more ſolid than mere ſenſibility, yet if inclination is not concerned, we are not deeply engaged. The fancy admits not of conviction. If the heart is not affected, we advance neither rapidly nor far. Virtue and inclination united to form thoſe ancient friendſhips, whoſe memory has deſcended to

our days. Montaign, who deſcribes to us the riſe of his ſentiments towards his friend, ſays he was ſmitten as one in love:—he was in a ſituation to reliſh friendſhip. Freed from paſſions, and devoted to reaſon, there remained to him no other enjoyment.

Perſons recovered from violent paſſions, and who are reſtored to themſelves, from a conviction *of the little value* of things in general, are moſt proper for true friendſhip. Thoſe who are free, and diſengaged from the million of frivolous amuſements, attach themſelves to you by ſentiment; but however inſenſible to their own wants, they fail not to feel and to alleviate thoſe of their friends,

friends. We never live in ſuch a degree of independence, as to be able to diſpenſe with reciprocal aſſiſtance; but good offices ſhould follow friendſhip, not friendſhip good offices. Friendſhip alſo requires conformity, equality of age, or what approaches to it, and a ſimilarity of inclinations and purſuits. Perſons elevated to a ſplendid ſtation, and intoxicated with proſperity; thoſe diſſipated minds which are careſſed by fortune, are by no means proper for friendſhip. Kings are alſo deprived of this ſweet ſentiment; they can never enjoy the certainty of being beloved for their own ſakes: it is always the king, and ſeldom the man:

man: I would not accept the firſt of dignities at this price. All things are a burthen, without the ſuccour of friendſhip. There never was a king, except Ageſilaus, who ſuffered for having made himſelf too much beloved. It is a noble dominion, to reign over every heart. Perſons of diſtinction are more eager to amaſs riches, than to acquire friends. Where is the perſon who thinks of gaining hearts by eſſential ſervices; of ſeeking after, and aſſiſting neglected merit; of preparing, in the heart of a friend, an aſylum for himſelf in the ſeaſon of diſgrace? The greater part of our acquiſitions are for others; this alone is for ourſelves.

A purity of morals is alſo neceſſary in friendſhip. The riſque is too great in uniting ourſelves with a perſon of an irregular conduct.

You ſee clearly that all the virtues are eſſential to perfect friendſhip.—Retirement is proper to cultivate this ſentiment. Solitude is the friend of wiſdom. The habitation of peace and truth is within ourſelves.—"It "is the mark of a well-formed "mind," ſays one of the ancients, "to know how to live "well with one's ſelf. How plea-"ſant is this ſyſtem of life, when "it is thoroughly underſtood, "and ſucceſsfully purſued!" Friendſhip demands an entire poſſeſſion

poſſeſſion of the whole mind: in retirement, this ſentiment becomes more neceſſary and leſs divided. Moreover, we are generally ſuch to others as we are to ourſelves. The wiſe know how to eſtabliſh peace within themſelves, and can communicate it to others. Seneca ſays, "I have advanced ſo far in im-"provement, that I have learnt "to be a friend to myſelf." Whoever can live with themſelves, may live with others. Mild and gentle characters diffuſe a ſoft charm over all that approach them. Retirement ſecures innocence, and renders friendſhip more requiſite. Some witneſs of our conduct is neceſſary, to

eſtimate

eſtimate our good qualities, as without ſuch, we advance faintly in the road of virtue. When you eſteem your friend to a certain degree, you place all your glory in his approbation. If you are happy, you would divide your happineſs with him: and indeed, all valuable poſſeſſions become inſipid when unobſerved.

I believe that extreme youth is by no means ſuited to the pleaſures of perfect friendſhip: we ſee many young perſons fancy, and call themſelves friends; but the bonds of their union are pleaſures, and pleaſures are not ties worthy of friendſhip. "You "are at the age," ſays Seneca to his friend, "when the violent

" paſſions are no more; only the " gentler ones remain:—we can " now enjoy the noble pleaſure of " friendſhip."

What renders friendſhip moſt certain and moſt ſolid, is virtue; abſence from the world; love of ſolitude; and purity of manners; a life which reſtores us to wiſdom and to ourſelves; an elevated ſpirit (for there is a refinement and dignity in perfect friendſhip, to which minds of an ordinary level can never riſe); but, above all, a purity of heart. The qualities of the heart are much more neceſſary than thoſe of the underſtanding. The underſtanding may amuſe, but it is the heart that attaches. Thoſe who are influenced

influenced by ſelf-love, are unworthy of it: they only think of taking from the fund of friendſhip, whereas the virtuous are only deſirous of adding to it. The avaricious are unacquainted with a ſentiment ſo noble. True friendſhip is liberal: avarice forms an unſurmountable obſtacle to every virtue. The ſentiment of avarice retards, or, to ſpeak more properly, ſtifles every good inclination. There is not a virtue which does not exact ſomething from its poſſeſſor; but the avaricious mind is always inclined to draw every thing from others. We muſt give without a chance of return; we muſt riſque the

danger of encountering ingratitude.

There are three ſeaſons in friendſhip;—the beginning, the continuance, and the end. As the commencement of friendſhip abounds with ſentiments, and as a riſing amity is ſupported by ſome illuſion—nothing is painful in theſe firſt moments; all is pleaſure: but it often happens that fancy dies away, and this energy of ſentiment is impaired by habitude. The illuſion diſappears, and we are reduced to call reaſon to our ſupport, a dry and cold counſellor, at beſt.

Of our friendſhip, as of our love,

love, we ſhould not be too laviſh. There is a degree of allowable œconomy; but how is it poſſible to reſtrain ourſelves in the enjoyment of a pleaſure that has the ſanction of innocence? However, as there is nothing in life ſo pleaſing as a lively friendſhip, the parties ſhould equally co-operate towards the preſervation of a ſtate ſo deſirable; for happineſs is nothing more than a conſtant ſucceſſion of pleaſing ſenſations and agreeable ideas. We feel the preſent—we imagine the future. Friendſhip fills both theſe periods, and ſupports both the ſentiments. To the preſent, ſhe gives perceptible delight; to the future,

the brilliant viſions of hope: but as it has been obſerved, that all ſenſibility is liable to decay, and that the pureſt hearts cannot engage to preſerve always the quickneſs of a growing friendſhip; they may therefore be ſometimes inconſtant, but never unfaithful. The vivacity of inclination fades away, but the love of duty remains. Such are to be pitied, for they have loſt a pleaſing ſentiment. Why have we not the power of inſuring it? Let us therefore give to friendſhip the more ſolid foundation of eſteem, which, built on the knowledge of merit, is not liable to change. The bandage on the eyes of love, ſhould be ever removed from thoſe

thoſe of friendſhip: it is her nature to be quick-ſighted, to examine before ſhe forms her engagements, and to attach herſelf only to perſonal merit; for thoſe alone are worthy of her regard, who poſſeſs in themſelves a juſt title to her affection.

After having made a proper choice, we muſt be ſteady; not eſteem our friends with a variable regard, but with an unſhaken attachment; for when ſenſibility would eſcape, and carry eſteem away with it, juſtice ſhould interfere to retain it. We muſt not allow ourſelves to pry into the defects of our friends; ſtill leſs to ſpeak of them. We ſhould reſpect friendſhip but as ſhe is

given us as an aſſiſtant to virtue, and not as the companion of vice. We muſt caution thoſe we regard, when we ſee them led aſtray; if they reſiſt, we muſt fortify ourſelves with that ſtrength and authority which ariſe from the prudence of wiſe counſel, and the purity of honeſt intentions. We ſhould hazard even the offending them, by our reſolution in ſpeaking truth: though the terms of it ſhould be ſoftened according to the nature of their neceſſity; for few have ſtrength of mind ſufficient to ſubmit to that truth which is to reform them. But while we blame them in private, we muſt defend them in public, and not ſuffer, if poſſible, their

their reputation to be doubtful.

What then, it may be aſked, is the boundary of friendſhip? It extends to the utmoſt pale of religion; duty and honor are the only bounds which ought to confine it; and there are many things, which the delicacy of honor allows us not to execute for ourſelves, which are yet permitted, and even laudable, in the ſervice of our friends. Diogenes uſed to ſay, "When I borrow of "my friend, it is my own money "that I aſk him for." Such a confidence is the nobleſt panegyric on both the parties.

Whatever your advantages may be, in the articles of virtue, talents,

lents, or fortune, they give you no claim to an oſtentatious ſuperiority. It has been made a queſtion, if we may entruſt another with the ſecret of our friend. The caſe admits not of deliberation; a ſecret is a truſt of which we cannot diſpoſe, becauſe it is not our own.

It now remains to enquire, in what manner we ought to conduct ourſelves when friendſhip begins to languiſh and change. As this union is formed between human beings, we muſt make an allowance for the failings of humanity. Many things muſt be overlooked on both ſides, if we wiſh to give permanency to friendſhip. The moſt virtuous

are

are moſt inclined to pardon—
" You will render your friend
" faithful," ſays one of the an-
cients, " in believing him to be
" ſo. We give ſome title to of-
" fend, to that perſon whom we
" think capable of offence."

Ordinary friendſhip is never willing to confeſs itſelf in the wrong; delicate friendſhip imputes every failing to herſelf; happy in being able to ſave our friend from every painful ſenſation, we would indulge him in the pleaſure of forgiving us, and ſave him from the humiliating neceſſity of aſking pardon. But for this purpoſe we muſt be connected with a noble ſpirit, poſſeſſing reſolution to bear the inſpection

ſpection of its own failings, and even to aſſume ſuch as do not belong to it.

If your friend ſtands in need of being guided and governed for his own advantage, you muſt preſerve a gentle hand, and never ſuffer him to feel his dependence. Nothing is more at variance with friendſhip, than thoſe ſelf-ſufficient characters, who endeavour to pry into your defects, and delight to diſplay them; ſuch a diſcovery is a triumph to them, as it fortifies their ſway, and encreaſes your dependence. Avoid every thing that irritates, and in expoſtulations beware of uſing any aſperity of language: there are terms of reproach which ought never to be admitted,

admitted, ſince they give ſuch wounds to the heart as no time can cloſe.

From the moment you find your anger begin to kindle, have a guard upon yourſelf; recollect that paſſion always commits a treſpaſs upon juſtice. But there are ſome, who have no ſooner committed one offence, than they perſevere to an hundred, and know not where to ſtop; they puniſh you for faults which they themſelves have committed, and are incapable of forgiveneſs: when ſuch have been deficient, you muſt not fancy that you can convince them of it; their underſtanding is the ſlave of their injuſtice:—you muſt not reproach them;

them; but if you would puniſh them, and avenge yourſelf with dignity, obſerve a ſtill greater nicety of behaviour; ſeek occaſions to ſhew them kindneſs; as it is your conduct which ſhould reproach them, and not your diſcourſe.

However ingenious ſelf-love may be in concealing our failings from us, there are moments ſacred to truth, in which ſhe makes herſelf viſible. The kindneſs we have ſhewn in the ſeaſon of friendſhip, muſt be forgotten at the time of ſeparation; and thoſe who do not feel themſelves paid for their ſervices by the pleaſure which they have had in performing them, cannot be ſaid to have given;

given; they have only lent, or ſold. In ſhort, we muſt fly in the purſuit of friendſhip, and the eſteem of our friends, and not be apprehenſive of doing too much.

If we are ſo unfortunate as to have made an improper choice, we muſt ſupport it, and by that means puniſh ourſelves for our imprudence, and for the raſhneſs of our attachment. Diſagreements are diſadvantageous to all parties. After having done all in your power to prevent them, as it will often happen that you are connected with obſtinate perſons, who only ſee you through the medium of their own perverſity, all is ineffectual. Nothing is more diſtreſſing, than to encounter thoſe

violent and inflammatory characters, who have only juſt underſtanding ſufficient to defend their own abſurdity; whatever ſteps you purſue, you will receive from them nothing but reproach. Let it not be the object of your ambition to reduce them to reaſon; but to ſubdue yourſelf: you muſt retire, and let your innocence tranquillize and conſole you.

Do not think, that when a ſeparation has taken place, you have no further duties to fulfil; here begin the moſt difficult of duties, and thoſe in which integrity alone can ſupport you: reſpect is due to paſt friendſhip, call not the world to be witneſs of your

quarrels, and never ſpeak of them but when you are forced to it in your own juſtification; even then, we ought not to aggravate the failings of our faithleſs friend. It is an ill ſight to the public, and a diſgraceful part to yourſelf, to appear in open diſſenſion. Reflect that all eyes are upon you —that your judges are all your enemies, either from ignorance of your real worth, or from envy, if they are acquainted with it, or from prejudice and natural malignity. Whatever has been imparted to your confidence in the ſeaſon of friendſhip, muſt never be revealed; remember that a ſecret is a debt of ancient friendſhip, which you owe to yourſelf.

In ſhort, the duties which you diſcharge in the ſeaſon of friendſhip, are for the perſon beloved; but after a rupture they are for yourſelf. In the ſeaſon of affection, we all know how to conduct ourſelves; we need only to follow our feelings: but when this is at an end, it is the voice of duty and reaſon which we muſt attend to and obey.

Few perſons know how to conduct themſelves in anger; the generality preſerve no moderation. How melancholy is it to give leſſons upon ſuch a misfortune—to contemplate, amidſt the enjoyments of friendſhip, the danger of their eſcaping us!—nevertheleſs, we ſhould reflect that we are threatened

threatened with ſuch a calamity, and that the moſt valuable friends may poſſeſs ſuch diſpoſitions as have a ſtrong tendency to produce diſſenſion. We muſt paſs lightly over ideas of this kind, or they would ruin the pleaſures of the moſt perfect amity.

Some perſons think there are no duties to diſcharge beyond the grave; very few are capable of being friends to the dead: tho' there is no funeral ſo truly noble as the tears and lamentations of our friends; and the moſt glorious ſepulchre is in their hearts: nevertheleſs, we are not to believe that the tears which we ſhed through ſenſibility, and frequent-

ly from the bitter ſenſe of our own loſs, can acquit us towards them. There are duties which we ſtill owe to their name, their reputation, and their family; they muſt live in our hearts by tenderneſs, in our memory by recollection, in our diſcourſe by commendations, and in our conduct by an imitation of their virtues.

If I have given precepts for behaviour, when theſe ties are either broke or ſlackened, I am by no means of opinion that we ought to love our friend as if we were one day to hate him; my heart has never liſtened to the doctrines of Machiavel, it is very

far from conducting itſelf by his maxims. Thoſe who know me, are convinced, that in friendſhip I have hardly the proper degree of reſerve; never am I cautioned by my own feelings to diſtruſt my friends: thoſe who think after the faſhion of the vulgar, conſider me as a kind of dupe: I only ſave myſelf from the humiliation of the character, by rejoicing in the comfort which it affords. Thus the prudence from which I have hitherto collected theſe maxims, has not yet paſſed into my heart; but cuſtom, the world, and my own experience, have but too well inſtructed me, that in friendſhip the beſt acquired, and

the moſt deſerved, we muſt treaſure up a fund of conſtancy and virtue, to be able to ſupport the loſs of it.

It has been aſked, if friendſhip can ſubſiſt between perſons of different ſexes? This is indeed rare and difficult, but it is the kind of friendſhip which affords the higheſt delight; moſt difficult, becauſe it requires moſt virtue and circumſpection. Women who have only the common ideas of love, are not worthy of it: and men who only ſeek in women the ordinary pleaſures of the ſex, without ſuppoſing that they may poſſeſs qualities of the mind and heart more attractive

than thoſe of beauty; ſuch men are not formed for the friendſhip of which I ſpeak. Let us therefore attach ourſelves by the ties of virtue and of perſonal merit; connections of this kind ſometimes begin in love, and terminate in friendſhip. When women are faithful to the virtue of their ſex, friendſhip being the recompence of virtuous love, they may flatter themſelves with the hopes of it. From the manner in which love is treated at this time, it frequently terminates in an open quarrel, ſhame being generally the puniſhment of vice. When women oppoſe their duty to their affection, and offer you

the charms and ſentiments of friendſhip; when, moreover, you diſcover in them the ſame merit as in men, can you do better than connect yourſelf with them? It is certain, that of all unions it is the moſt enchanting; there is always a degree of vivacity, which is not to be found between perſons of the ſame ſex—above all, the failings that diſunite, ſuch as envy or competition, of whatever nature it may be, is not to be found in this ſort of connection. Women have the misfortune of not being able to depend on friendſhip with each other: the multiplicity of their failings forms an inſurmountable impediment;

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they unite from neceſſity, and never from inclination. To what account, then, may they venture to turn that fund of ſentiment which they poſſeſs? Thoſe who have denied themſelves to love, are naturally led into friendſhip, and men are conſiderable gainers by this meaſure; for when women have not exhauſted the ſenſibility of their hearts by the paſſions, their friendſhip is peculiarly intereſting and tender; for it muſt be confeſſed (to the glory, or to the diſgrace of women) that they alone are capable of giving all that poignancy to ſentiment, which

which they generally give.—Men ſpeak to the underſtanding, women to the heart. Moreover, as nature has placed inviſible attractions and ties between perſons of different ſex, we find every preparation for friendſhip. The works of nature are always the moſt perfect; thoſe in which ſhe has not the principal ſhare, are the leaſt engaging. In the friendſhip of which I ſpeak, we feel that it is her work; theſe ſecret ties, theſe ſympathies, this ſweet inclination, which there is no reſiſting; all are comprized in it. A bleſſing ſo deſirable,

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is always the recompence of merit; but we ought to watch over ourſelves, leſt a virtue ſhould change imperceptibly into paſſion.

ESSAY

ESSAY ON OLD-AGE.

EVERY neceſſary aſſiſtance has been given to men for the improvement of their reaſon, and for their inſtruction in the great ſcience of happineſs, in every ſtage of their lives. Cicero has written a treatiſe on Old-Age, to put them in a ſituation to extract ſome advantages from a period,

a period, in which every thing ſeems to deſert us.

Attention is directed to the improvement of men alone; but as to women, at all ſeaſons of life they are left to themſelves: their education is neglected in their youth; in the ſequel they are deprived of conſolation and ſupport for their old-age.

Thus the greateſt part of women live without thought, without ſelf-examination: in youth they are vain and diſſipated, in old-age weak and forſaken. We arrive at each ſeaſon, without knowing either how to conduct ourſelves in it, or to enjoy it: when it is paſt, we ſee the uſe we might have made of it; but

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as regret is unprofitable when it ſerves not to reform us, let us turn to our advantage the time that remains. I ſupport myſelf by my own reflections, and as I approach that age when all things forſake us, I wiſh my reaſon to afford me a compenſation for what I loſe.

All the world has a dread of old-age; it is regarded as a ſeaſon given up to pain and vexation, in which all pleaſures diſappear. Every one loſes in advancing in life, and the women more than the men. As all their merit conſiſts in exterior graces, and as time deſtroys them, they are left entirely deſtitute; for there are very few women whoſe merit

merit is more laſting than their beauty. Let us try if it be not poſſible to replace it; and, ſince there is no bleſſing ſo trivial that it may not be turned to ſome advantage in the hands of a dextrous perſon, let us endeavour to render the ſeaſon of old-age profitable, by making it conducive to our happineſs and perfection.

Let us examine the duties of old-age; the reſpect and propriety which are due to that period: and let us enquire into the advantages which may be drawn from it, that we may enjoy them. Life does not conſiſt ſo much in the ſpace of time, as in the uſe we are able to make of

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it. We ſhould lay down a plan, and follow it with exactneſs; for to be ever changing our reſolutions and our conduct, is mangling our exiſtence. We ſhorten it by our inſtability, and lengthen it by an uniformity of conduct.

Theſe reflections, my child, which belong to my ſituation at preſent, will be one day your's. Prepare for yourſelf an happy old-age, by a youth of innocence. Recollect that the pleaſurable age is but a flower, which you will ſee faded. The graces will deſert you, and health will diſappear. Old-age will come, and deſtroy the roſes in your cheeks. Young as you are, that which

travels with ſuch rapidity, is not far from you.

We have, in growing old, the common evils of humanity. The infirmities of the body and the mind are attendants on advanced life. *Old-age*, ſays Montaign, *impreſſes more wrinkles on the mind than on the face.* The paſſions may be ſaid to lie in wait for us during the whole courſe of our lives. There ſeem to be ambuſcades of them, through which we muſt neceſſarily paſs. *From the torrid paſſions*, ſays Montaign, *we retreat to the temperate.*

Melancholy reflections are in the train of old-age. They dry up the ſources of joy and pleaſure. They make us diſguſted

with the preſent, and dread the future. They render us inſenſible to every thing but pain.

All theſe misfortunes are common to both ſexes; but there are ſome which are peculiar to women. As there are different characters, there are different kinds of pain to ſuffer, and meaſures to purſue. Women are either libertine or virtuous. Theſe two characters are varied with infinite diſcriminations, and there are many ſhades and degrees in both. As to thoſe, who are born without tenderneſs or attractions, and who have neither made nor received any impreſſion; they enjoy a tranquillity and a regularity of life, and have leſs to

loſe, as they advance in years, than thoſe who are ſuſceptible of ſentiment, and calculated to inſpire it. Nevertheleſs, theſe have many uneaſineſſes to ſuffer, and imperfections to ſtruggle with. They ought to be on their guard againſt melancholy. We become enemies to joy, which our intereſt ſhould lead us to cheriſh in ourſelves, and which we ought not to cenſure in others. But we muſt chuſe our pleaſures, or rather our amuſements; what is allowable and graceful at one age, is unbecoming at another.

Avarice is alſo one of the weakneſſes belonging to the latter period of life. As every thing fails, we wiſh for ſomething

thing to lean on; and we attach ourſelves to riches as our ſupport. Nevertheleſs, if we could reaſon properly, we ſhould ſee that we have no real occaſion for them, and that we enſure more comfort by ſharing them with others, than by amaſſing them for ourſelves.

But let us return to women of gaiety; they have moſt to loſe in growing old, and a more difficult part to act. As there are various ſorts of them, ſo there are different kinds of conduct to obſerve. For thoſe who have ſhown no diſcretion, and who have been unfaithful to the prejudices, and to the virtues of their ſex, they loſe infinitely

on the failure of pleaſures; for theſe being the only ties which united them to men, their connection muſt be diſſolved. For thoſe who have known how to reſpect themſelves, who have been able to join probity and friendſhip to love; theſe are ſtill connected with men by the virtues of ſociety; for virtue alone has a right to unite us. Feeling characters have more to undergo. The heart does not exhauſt itſelf like the ſenſes. Attachment to our duties is often followed by a long and painful ſenſibility. Love indemnifies himſelf on the ſentiments of the heart, for what the ſenſes have refuſed him. The more the

ſentiments are reſtrained, the more lively they become. Inclination grows weaker by indulgence, and the paſſions of women wear out like thoſe of men. In ſhort, there is a period in the lives of women, which becomes a criſis. It is the conduct which they obſerve, and the part that they take at that time, which gives the laſt finiſh to their reputation, and upon which depends the repoſe of their whole lives.

Women ſupport themſelves in youth by a vivacity of conſtitution, which hurries them towards ſuch objects as gratify their ſenſes, and which delivers them to the paſſions, either

allowable or forbidden. The novelty of the ſcene, which excites and nouriſhes their curioſity, ſupports them. For thoſe who have beauty and attractions, they enjoy the advantage of their own figure, and the impreſſion which they make on others. Their ſelf-love is always gratified by what they find in themſelves, and by the affection which they inſpire.

What authority is more inſtantaneous, more ſweet, and more abſolute, than that of beauty? Majeſty and power have dominion only over external objects, that of beauty reaches the ſoul. There is hardly an amiable woman

man that has not enjoyed theſe triumphs. Moreover, what a fund of amuſements does not the deſire of pleaſing ſupply? All the apparatus of gallantry, allowable in a young perſon, dreſs, diververſions; all theſe pleaſures are the occupations of a certain age. What activity do the paſſions not inſpire? Can we be agitated more forcibly than by their power? The events of female life depend on them, and great eſtabliſhments have often been the conſequence and the reward of a ſentiment.

All theſe things are connected with each other; they relate to the heart, and conſtitute an active and buſy life, even for thoſe who have not made an improper uſe

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of their liberty. All this vaniſhes at an after-period, when, if you wiſh to try the ſenſibility of the heart, you find it alive only to pain. There comes a ſeaſon in which you muſt lead a ſort of life ſuitable to the decency and dignity of your age. You muſt give up all that is called lively pleaſure. It often happens that you have loſt all taſte for amuſements: they can no longer employ your hours; you have even loſt your real friends, and the time is paſt for you to make others. The eſtate of beauty is love, and the recompence of virtuous love is friendſhip; and you are very fortunate, when all your beſt years have procured you one or two

two real friends. In ſhort, you quit each ſeaſon of life as ſoon as you begin to be acquainted with it, and you enter quite a novice into another. All exterior objects afford you no further ſupport, or are prohibited to you. Within yourſelf you find nothing but infirmities of body, and melancholy reflections in the mind, nothing but diſguſt. You muſt break all commerce with ſentiment. We feel our ties when they ought to be diſſolved. Devotion has been called the play-thing, but I conſider it as the ſtaff of age; it is a becoming ſentiment, and the only one neceſſary. The yoke of religion is not a burden, but a ſupport.

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But let us proceed to the duties of old-age. In all the ſeaſons of life we have duties to diſcharge, both to others and to ourſelves, and thoſe which we owe to others double as we grow old. When we can no longer diffuſe the charm of chearfulneſs over ſociety, it has a ſtronger claim on us for intrinſic virtues. In youth others will attend to you. In old-age you muſt attend to others: participation is expected from us, and our failure is not forgiven. With our youth we loſe the privilege of erring. It is no longer permitted us to be in the wrong. We have no longer that ſeducing charm, and we are judged with ſeverity. The firſt graces of youth

youth have a luſtre which covers every thing. The errors in judgment are pardoned, and have the merit of ſimplicity.

In growing old, we muſt obſerve, above all, propriety in our converſation and in our dreſs. Nothing is more ridiculous than making it appear, by ſtudied ornaments, that you wiſh to recall the departing graces. An avowed old-age is leaſt old. The greateſt misfortune of women who have been lovely, is their forgetting that they are ſo no more.

We muſt alſo plan out for ourſelves a ſuitable mode of life. It is not living as we ought to live, under the dominion of our paſſions and fantaſies; we only live as becomes

us, when we live according to reaſon. We muſt alſo pay attention to our ſociety, and only unite with perſons of ſimilar age and diſpoſitions. Shews and public places ought to be prohibited, or at leaſt we ſhould viſit them but rarely. Nothing is leſs decent, than to diſplay there a countenance which has loſt its graces. When you can no longer adorn thoſe ſcenes, it is time to quit them. The advantages of underſtanding are but ill ſupported, when contraſted with the brilliancy of youth. They ſerve but to make you feel too ſeverely what you have loſt: nothing ſuits us then ſo well as home; our ſelf-love ſuffers leſs there than in other places. There are, however,

ever, allowable amuſements, and all that is called pleaſure is not forbidden.

Let us examine what we owe to ourſelves; our ſentiments and our conduct ought to be different from what it has been in our earlieſt years. You owe to the world the obligations of politeneſs; but you owe to yourſelf ſuch ſentiments as are allowable and innocent, from a ſenſe of your own dignity; for we muſt live upon good terms with ourſelves. It is neceſſary alſo for our own repoſe; but it ought to be conſidered, that there are ſentiments, from which to be divorced, affects the very ſoul. You neither know their price,

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nor the uſe which ſhould be made of them, till they are to be given up. In a more advanced age, the taſte becomes more delicate upon thoſe points which wound, and more exquiſite upon thoſe which pleaſe. Love is the firſt of pleaſures, and the ſweeteſt of errors; but when youth has forſaken you, the pains double, and the pleaſures diminiſh.

What conſtitutes the misfortune of a certain ſeaſon is, that we wiſh to preſerve, and to carry ſentiments into an age in which they ought not to appear. Is that the fault of the ſeaſon? is it not rather our own? Our manners make the misfortune, not old-age. Every ſeaſon muſt be a burden to thoſe who

have not within themſelves the powers of rendering life happy. We muſt with docility ſubmit ourſelves to the pains of our age, and of our ſituation. Nature makes a kind of agreement with men; ſhe only gives them life upon conditions: ſhe gives us nothing as our property; ſhe does no more than lend. We muſt not revolt at the natural progreſs of humanity. A philoſopher who had lived to a hundred and ſeven years, was aſked if he did not find life tireſome? He replied, I have no reaſon to complain of my old-age, as I never made an ill uſe of my youth. When the morals are pure and innocent in early life, old-age is mild and tran-

quil. It is the long habit of virtue, which is the ſupport and conſolation of an advanced age. When you have practiſed this in youth, you reap the fruit of it in the laſt ſeaſon; but we aſcribe to that ſeaſon the misfortunes which our own irregularities have brought upon us.

The wants of the heart are infinite, thoſe of nature are limited. Happy is that old-age in which the heart is devoted to heaven. Devotion is a proper ſentiment for women, and becoming to both ſexes. Old-age, without religion, is burdenſome. All the exterior pleaſures abandon us. We even fly from ourſelves. The beſt of bleſſings, health and youth,

are vaniſhed. The paſt ſupplies you with regret, the preſent eſcapes you, and the future makes you tremble. The infidel ſees only pains prepared for him: the philoſopher, only annihilation.

Behold the termination of the moſt brilliant life in the world! The laſt act is always tragical; but how great the gain, to change the idea of annihilation for that of eternity! If we live in a manner to render it bleſſed, how beautiful the proſpect of an eternity of bliſs! but the greateſt part of mankind ſuffer their life to paſs away without a thought of aſcertaining their real ſituation. Who would believe that theſe very men, who are ſo zealous upon

that which regards their glory or their fortune, when they think it in danger, are tranquil and indolent concerning the knowledge of their being; that they will ſuffer themſelves to be effeminately led on to death, without informing themſelves whether what they have been told are chimæras or truths; that they ſhould travel on their road, and ſee advancing towards them death, eternity, and everlaſting puniſhments and rewards, without reflecting that theſe great truths concern and intereſt them? Can we, without foreſight and without fear, proceed to the trial of ſo great an event? This is, nevertheleſs, the ſtate in which the ge-

nerality of men live; and for thoſe few who have taken the good or the bad ſide, how many are there who never think of it? For thoſe who are ſo happy as to be affected by religion, their piety conſoles them. It is alſo moſt eaſy to practiſe.

All the chains that attach us to life are nearly broken. It is the work of nature, more than that of our reaſon, to detach us from it. The bandage of illuſion is fallen, and we ſee things as they are. A knowledge of the world is dearly purchaſed, and thoſe who are beſt acquainted with it know, that it is only good to take leave of.

Subſtantial bleſſings are always wanting in this deceitful world, and we often find it deficient even in tranſient pleaſures. We ſhall draw nothing ſo valuable from the world as we ſhall from devotion. She has many reſources.

Reſignation is requiſite in every period of life, but the practice of it is moſt neceſſary in old-age, as we are ſuſtaining loſſes continually. But as ſentiment is leſs lively, we attach ourſelves leſs to things. We muſt follow nature imperceptibly, without revolting againſt her. She is the beſt guide we can have. We live but to loſe, and to wean ourſelves from the objects of our regard.

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We muſt expect a change both in ourſelves and in others, and on theſe occaſions we ſhould ſhew ſuch indulgence to others as we wiſh to receive on the appearance of a ſimilar change in ourſelves. But our loſſes are frequently to our advantage. Worthy minds will rejoice in being freed from the fetters of voluptuouſneſs. We are to blame therefore our morals, and not our period of life, for what we ſuffer. We ſhould ſubmit mildly to the laws of our condition: we are all made to grow weak, to grow old, and to die. Nothing is more idle than to ſtruggle againſt the effects of time. He is our ſuperior in

ſtrength. In youth we all live as it were in the future. Life is ſpent in deſire, and to the future we truſt for our joys and repoſe. In old-age we muſt ſeize them in the inſtant. Montaign ſays, that he turns every thing to advantage. I feel, ſays he, as other men do, but not quite in ſo tranſient a manner. In proportion as life becomes ſhorter, I would encreaſe my reliſh for what remains. I would ſtop the rapidity of its flight by the eagerneſs of my graſp. We muſt ſupport old-age by every prop. I make all things contribute to my aid, and both wiſdom and folly will have enough to do in aſſiſting me

me with their alternate good offices under this latter period of life.

One of the duties of old-age, is the management of time. The leſs that remains to us, the more valuable we ought to conſider it. The time of Chriſtians is the price with which they purchaſe eternity. Without waſting it, therefore, in the purſuit of vain ſciences, which are above us, let us make the proper uſe of our ſituation, and juſtly eſtimate the reach of our underſtanding.

We are leſs limited in the article of enjoyment, than in that of knowledge: we have indeed as much light as is neceſſary and proper for our well-being; but we engage

gage in the vain purſuit of truths which were not deſigned for our apprehenſion; but before we enter into inquiries which are above our reach, we ought to know the limits of our underſtanding. What is the rule that ought to determine our perſuaſion? We muſt learn to ſeparate opinion from real knowledge; to have the ſtrength to pauſe and to doubt, when we ſee nothing clearly; and to have the reſolution to bear the ignorance of truths which are beyond our comprehenſion. But to check our preſumption, and to weaken our confidence, let us reflect that the two principles of our knowledge,

ledge, our reaſon and our ſenſes, are deficient in ſincerity, and very apt to miſlead us. The ſenſes overpower reaſon by ſurprize, and the reaſon deceives them in its turn. Behold our two guides, who both lead us aſtray! Reflections like theſe inſpire us with diſguſt for mere ſpeculative truths, let us then employ our time in attainments which will contribute to our happineſs and perfection.

There is hardly any age, which has not in its diſpoſal a certain portion of bleſſings:—to the firſt period, belong the lively pleaſures of the ſenſes and imagination; to the ſecond, thoſe of ambition and opinion; and to the

the laſt, the poſſeſſion of reaſon and tranquillity. Serenity of ſoul is the moſt neceſſary diſpoſition for happineſs. When the ſoul is not ſhaken by a multitude of ſenſations, it is in a better ſtate to make the moſt of thoſe bleſſings which preſent themſelves, and gains as much by the improvement of its reliſh, as it loſes by the failure of its objects.

It has been conſidered as the duty of old-age to think of death. I believe it is uſeful to reflect upon it, for the regulation of our lives, and to detach ourſelves from the world. But it is not neceſſary to have it always in contemplation,

contemplation, to afflict us. The idea is afflicting from the firſt opening of the ſcene. How beautiful ſoever the drama, the curtain muſt fall. The nobleſt lives terminate in the ſame manner. A little duſt is thrown over us, and we are plunged into eternity. Montaign does not agree with me. He would rather diſarm death, by familiarizing the mind to its terrors. We muſt hope that Heaven will ſupport us in our cloſing ſcene. It ſhould be our only aim to engage its protection, by a life of innocence and virtue. We ſhould alſo be careful not to ſet too high a value on life. It has always

ways attractions ſufficient to attach us, and misfortunes enough to reconcile us to its loſs. A philoſopher anſwered a man, who aſked him if he ſhould deſtroy himſelf—You have no reflection upon a point of ſo much importance. Great men do not meaſure life by the duration in point of time, but by its proportion of glory. An exemplary death throws a luſtre upon life; a weak one diſhonors it. To form a complete judgment of any one, we ought to have ſeen him acting the laſt part.

Life is in itſelf ſhort, and we make it more ſo, by our levity and irregularities. The ſhort time we exiſt,

exiſt, we live leſs for ourſelves than for the paſſions which torment us. Whoever ſubſtracts from their exiſtence the portion of time allotted for ſleep, and other neceſſities, for the diſorders of mind and body, will diſcover, that little remains to us for happineſs; and out of a long life, we ſhall with difficulty extract ſome years of it.

It has been ſaid, we ought to finiſh our lives before our death, that is to ſay, our projects. To finiſh our life, is to have worn out our inclination for it; for with reſpect to our projects, as long as we live we muſt amuſe ourſelves with hopes, and we exiſt leſs

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in the preſent than in the future. Life would be ſhort, if hope did not give it extent. The preſent, ſays Paſcal, is never our aim: the paſt and the preſent are our means; the future alone is our object. Thus we do not exiſt, but we hope to do ſo. We ſhould, however, make haſte to live. It is not wiſe to ſay, I ſhall live to-morrow. The Philoſophers ſay, Learn to live; and the Chriſtians, Learn every day how to die.

One of the advantages of old-age is liberty. Piſiſtratus aſked Solon, who oppoſed him, on what he grounded his liberty? Upon my old-age, he replied, which has no longer any thing to fear.

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The latter ſeaſon ſets us free from the tyranny of opinion. When we are young, we think only of living in the conceit of others. We muſt eſtabliſh our reputations, and give ourſelves an honorable place in the imagination of others; and we muſt even be happy in their idea. Such happineſs is not real;—it is not ourſelves we conſult, but others. In a later period, we return to ourſelves, and this return has its ſweets. We begin to conſult and to confide in ourſelves. We eſcape from fortune and from illuſion. Men have loſt their prerogative of deceiving us. We have learnt to know

them, and to know ourſelves; to profit from our own faults, which inſtruct us as much as thoſe of others. We begin to ſee our error, in having ſet ſo high a value upon men. Often do they teach us, to our coſt, to place no dependence upon any thing. Infidelity diſengages us; the falſity of pleaſure undeceives us.

Old-age delivers us alſo from the tyranny of the paſſions, and convinces us, that there is a conſiderable pleaſure in diſcovering that we can exiſt without them, and a high degree of delight, in feeling ourſelves ſuperior to their controul. — Nature ſupplies us with

with taſtes and deſires conformable to our preſent ſituation. In youth, we conceive a falſe idea of old-age: theſe are fears which we contract ourſelves. It is not nature that inſpires them, becauſe, during the period we are in, we dread the paſſions of another period, which is a ſtranger to us.

Nature is full of admirable reſources—ſhe conducts and governs us almoſt without our knowing it, and has the art of aſſiſting us under every inconvenience. Deprivations are no longer felt, when deſire is extinguiſhed. All our inclinations paſs away, even to that of life itſelf. It is to be wiſhed that

all the paſſions ſhould expire before us—this is to have finiſhed our life before we die. In this ſeaſon, reaſon is reſtored to us. She reſumes all her rights. We begin to live when we begin to obey her — for they whoſe thoughts, whoſe hopes, and even whoſe reaſon, is at the mercy of fortune, and of their own fantaſies, they can aſſure themſelves of nothing, having nothing for their ſupport. It is melancholy to arrive at the end of life without having made any proviſion of real bleſſings, which never decay. Nevertheleſs, men employ themſelves entirely in amaſſing ſuch poſſeſſions as they muſt neceſ-

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ſarily loſe, without reflecting that thoſe periſhable commodities do not belong to us. Experience is alſo one of the advantages of the laſt ſeaſon. We are inſtructed by the paſt—even our errors reform, and reſtore to us our reaſon, which is ſeldom preſerved in proſperity; for thoſe perſons, who have been always happy, have ſeldom deſerved to be ſo. But there are troubles that ariſe from fortune and from chance, and others, which flow from irregularity of morals. Theſe corrupt the mind and deſtroy the health; for the ſequel of an irregular youth, is a miſerable old-age, and frequently we employ the firſt

part of our lives to render the remainder of them wretched.

The ſlavery of the paſſions is a kind of impriſonment, in which the ſoul is impaired and weakened. When we are delivered from them, the ſoul enlarges and expands. At a certain age, we are no longer to be enſnared by the pleaſures of the imagination. We know how deceitful they are, and that all the paſſions promiſe more than they give. Thoſe which are only ſupported by illuſion, are miſplaced and odious at a certain age. Ambition, extended too far, degenerates into folly; and love, by diſplaying itſelf to public view, becomes the object of ridicule.

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There comes a ſeaſon in our lives, which is ſacred to truth. —which is deſtined to make things appear according to their juſt value. Youth, and the paſſions, give a falſe colouring to every thing—we are then reſtored to pleaſures of genuine ſimplicity — we begin to conſult and to rely on our own ſentiments concerning happineſs. We muſt in ſome degree, accommodate ourſelves to the cuſtoms of life—but we ſhould not ſurrender to them either our liberty or our judgment.

Nothing is more glorious than to make an honourable retreat, and to ſecure to ourſelves an interval of

leiſure between life and death. Death, ſays Montaign, is no ſocial buſineſs, but the act of an individual. In old-age, we ought rather to be avaricious than prodigal of our ſociety. It has been ſaid of a man, that he took the counſel of his old-age, and retired. We owe the firſt and the ſecond ſeaſon to our country, and the laſt to ourſelves. To live in perpetual employment, is to travel rapidly through life. Tranquillity lengthens our exiſtence. The world ſteals us from ourſelves and ſolitude reſtores us.—The world is compoſed of a herd, which are ever flying from themſelves. Solitude, ſays an exalted character,

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is the infirmary of ſouls; retire then within yourſelf, but prepare for yourſelf a good reception. Unite the oppoſite ſentiments of ſhame and reſpect, and, diſcarding the littleneſs of ſelf-love, learn to reverence your own character.

The general practice is quite the reverſe; but how melancholy to retain this ſelf-love, and to ſee ourſelves dying every inſtant! It is eſſential to our intereſt, to wean ourſelves from this ſelfiſh affection, to break part of theſe fetters, and make at leaſt ſome advances towards freedom—to cloſe every avenue that might conduct us back into the world,

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and not even caſt a look towards it. O happy exiſtence, which finds itſelf delivered from every ſpecies of ſlavery! in which we relinquiſh all things—not from a tranſitory diſguſt, but from a confirmed judgment, ſupported by the conviction of the ſmall value of things in general. It is this knowledge which reconciles us with wiſdom, which makes old-age palatable to us, if I may hazard ſuch an expreſſion.

It belongs only to liberal ſouls to make a proper eſtimate of life and death—ſuch alone as are full of reſources can extract enjoyment from theſe declining years. Weak minds endure them; but minds

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of ſuperior ſtrength convert them to advantage. It has been ſaid, that there was no ſpectacle more worthy of a God, than a virtuous man ſtruggling with adverſity. We may ſay the ſame thing of a man abandoned to himſelf, ſtruggling with old-age, infirmity, and death. In retirement, which is the aſylum of age, we enjoy an uninterrupted calm. Innocent days bring with them nights of tranquillity, and while you aſſociate with the dead, they inſtruct, direct, and conſole you —theſe are certain and conſtant friends, devoid of caprice or jealouſy. In ſhort, it has been ſaid, that the moſt pleaſing period in

the life of man is the cloſe of it.

As we advance, we learn alſo to ſubmit ourſelves to the laws of neceſſity: that free-will, ſo ſtrong and unruly, becomes weak, and is inſenſibly extinguiſhed. We have too often proved, that reſiſtance is ineffectual, and leaves us nothing but the diſhonor of unſucceſsful rebellion. We often wiſh for what is contrary to our intereſt, and it frequently happens, that what we have ſuppoſed prejudicial, turns out to our advantage. We no longer know what we ought to wiſh for. We have no longer the ſtrength to deſire. We find it much eaſier to

to ſubmit, than to change the order of the world. Internal peace does not reſide in the ſenſes, but in the will. It is preſerved in the midſt of affliction, as long as the will remains firm and ſubmiſſive. Our peace does not conſiſt ſo much in an exemption from ſufferings, as in a mild reſignation under them. We ought to conſider every poſſeſſion, which is out of our reach, as ſtrangers to us. It is from regarding things as our due and property, that we ſuffer by their deprivation. Impoſſibility alone, can fix the imagination of man. Perſons of judgment employ themſelves in conſidering the limits

which are preſcribed by reaſon and nature.

In ſhort, all things are at peace, when they are in their natural order. The ſoul of man can repoſe only in the boſom of his God. When we reſign ourſelves to his guidance, reſignation and regularity reſtore us to that peace which our reſiſtance had deprived us of. The only ſecure aſylum for man, is in the love and in the fear of his Creator.

FINIS.